



*de Gournay*

## WALL UPHOLSTERY METHODS

We describe the process of installing a fabric covering permanently over an entire wall or a whole room as wall upholstery. This is different and distinct from drapery where a wall might be concealed with a curtain hung from a pole or with a tapestry mounted on hooks or simply a framed fabric panel as a decorative picture.

Wall upholstery offers the chance to create different appearances to an interior from those that traditional hard decorated walls exhibit. Walls are usually upholstered in a similar way that furniture is treated, so a padding is added under the decorative fabric to give it a slightly rounded shape and a soft to the touch feel. Such walls tend to look rich and sumptuous, especially when a luxury fabric is used. They will also offer greater acoustic and thermal insulation, the former meaning this technique is often applied for private media and meeting rooms for example.

While the basic principle does not vary, the method by which a wall might be upholstered does and different methods also offer designers practical and visual alternatives to choose between. There is no right nor wrong method. This text has been written to give an over view of the subject and we hope to leave the reader better informed when planning or discussing the options with expert trades offering such services. de Gournay's standard wall upholstery drawings allow for any of the general installation methods below to be used without further modification.



## TRADITIONAL FRENCH SYSTEM

Regarded as the original method by many, the fabric that will cover one whole wall is stitched together and stretched tightly as one piece seamlessly over the wall mounted on a series of wooden battens that are themselves attached to the wall. Convex corners are wrapped, concave ones form the end of a single run of fabric. The look achieved is the smoothest and most flush of the three systems. The finished effect is smooth enough to not necessarily require braids or trims to hide seams or joints rather allowing these to be added if desired to taste only.





## REMOVABLE / ACCESSIBLE SYSTEM

Individual fabric panels are stretched between a choice of proprietary gripper profile systems which are attached to the walls. The fabric does not need to be permanently fixed and therefore remains removable so individual panels can be replaced easily. Panels can be installed with or without a padded base allowing for the decorative fabric to span hidden services such as loudspeakers while remaining acoustically transparent making this a popular option for media and cinema space applications. The divisions between installed panels are visible but gaps are slim and consistent. Although decorative braids or trims can be used to cover these seam gaps, doing so compromises the removability of the fabric and for this reason they tend not to be used.

## PANELLED SYSTEM

Individual fabric panels are stretched over a stiff board and the fabric wrapped to the back where it is fixed. The boards are then installed in series butted to one another across the walls. The fabric is typically installed with a thin upholstery padding behind it creating a shaped surface to each panel.

The divisions between installed panels are the most visible of the 3 systems both because the surface shape of each panel will dip towards the edges and also because the butted joints are the widest of the 3 systems. This method does not require expert stitching of the panels together making it easier for installers to complete. A decorative braid or trim can be installed over the seams and because there are visible seams within each wall span the effect created is the most panelled of the three systems. The boards can be installed in such a way to allow for removal and re-attachment to permit occasional access to services behind.





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Please contact us for further information and to discuss your project with one of our  
recommended wall upholsterers.  
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